

America

Coltruf March 25. - 1775.

Ch. G. 5. 51

My Dear Sir

I have, to my shame, been reading over your two most obliging letters of the 12. of December, and 24. of Feb: both unanswered. Since the date of the first things have taken a new and most astonishing turn. I can form no guess at the Ministers' motive for proposing the conciliatory bills. Could it have been merely a trick played to the opposition, in order to force their concurrence by taking up their ground? This I can not suppose. To dishonour the nation from such a motive would be base indeed! Could it be from information, that such terms would be acceptable to America. Then why do more than to pass the bills, without meaning compromise more than those already there, or upon their return, to send more commanders as were to fill their places. But to send a man of the first rank, to make such humiliating proposals, and still more so if in the uncertainty of their being greedily accepted; is humiliation beyond humiliation.

In this state of my mind, comes the news of the French ambassador's Declaration of the 14.th Ct. A Treaty Signed at Versailles the 6. of Feb. with ^{the} independent States of America. Lord North's Lopez

that still a war may be avoided by the Americans refusal to ratify the French treaty! What exultation to this infant empire of America! The Kings of Great Britain and of France employing their friendship and chance at one and the same time!

I am convinced that these republicans are in the most deplorable situation with respect to men, money, food, and raiment. I am also convinced that their misery and distress will be increased in consequence of a French alliance, drawing on a war by England against all the world who shall presume to trade with their rebellious subjects. His most Excellent Mr. hopes that this alliance will

not interrupt the harmony subsisting between him and the King of B. His Excellency Mr. hopes that his gentle orders to stop and search every French ship upon the coast, in order to disapparent the effects of this treaty will not interrupt the harmony between him and his M. C. M. This I think would be a proper answer

Shall we still send out our commissioners? Shall we not repeat our late acts? we have shown the Americans what lengths we have been willing to go. Their treaty with France leaves us no room to expect their acceptance of it. It is at their door so many the most proposals. The honour of a nation is the

RW 1912 (1)

lost thing to be given up; because when this is given up, nothing can be refused. And as Administration is not the nation; we have still an open door to retrieve it.

We expect this afternoon to hear the result of the King's message of the 17. Upon this I shall form my opinion of what is to follow.

I know something of French invasions, and I know something of the sentiments of M. De Maurepas concerning them. There is not one man in Europe who forms so just an opinion of the power of G. B. by sea as this old minister, and as I did (if I mistake not) the father of the present French ambassador (the late Marshal de Noailles) neither of them would have advised France to enter a war with G. B. for the sake of trade with America, a Devilish good trade it must be, if it can repay the price. I may be mistaken no doubt; but I imagine that had we not had peace with France, the Americans ~~would~~ could have had the supplies which have reached them in spite of all our vigilance. The French say they have six ships of the line, if so they have been very busy. They had not 5. at the end of the last war. Thank ^{God}. I am near 65 years old and am in such a situation as neither to have hopes or fears.

I send you enclosed a bill of lading for the box containing
your books and papers. Let me know if my friend passed be sent
off. My best respects to Mrs Hamilton. James is gone to his regiment.
Mrs Stewart remains with us, and, Mr Lady F. sends you and Mrs Hamel
her many kind compliments. I am ever my dear Sir

your most faithful humble servant
Jas. Stewart Dear Sir

Ans^d 23^d April.

To Archibald Hamilton Esq^r

Genovetta - Street Cavendish Square

London

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No. 2.
March 25th
1775

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